

FINAL Magnuson Park Advisory Committee Minutes
Sail Sand Point Conference Room
September 11, 2013 from 6 – 7:30 PM

Attending: MPAC Members: Julianna Ross, Peter Zimmerman, Gail Chiarello, Morgan Collins, Tom Kelly, Diana Kincaid, Lynn Ferguson (for Rusty Williams), Colby Bradley, Aaron Hoard, Herb Curl, Loren Hill, Nancy Bolin. Absent: Ed Bronsdon, Rusty Williams. Parks staff: Cheryl Fraser. Guests: Colleen McAleer, Kim Wells & Bob Scheulen.

Chair Julianna Ross called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Announcements from the Chair:

- Friday, October 11, 2013 4:00-6:30 there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Building 30. The Mayor is scheduled to actually cut the ribbon at 6:00PM. The entire building will be open to the public as an open house. There will be Grand Opening of the West Wing on November 16th to benefit Sand Point Arts & Cultural Exchange.

Approval of the July Minutes. The July Minutes were approved with two changes on page 2 regarding safe walking trails as follows: "Diana commented Magnuson should be a great walking park and also safe for women, which meant, nothing on the ground higher than 3 feet, with a sight line up to 8 feet."

Public Comment/Walking Trail: Public Comment/Walking Trail: Guests Kim Wells and Bob Scheulen brought the group's attention to the severe recent flooding on the Frog Pond Trail portion of the Walking Trail and its constant winter flooding. There was animated discussion of the flooding problems and possible low-cost fixes. Cheryl Fraser agreed that dealing with the flooding would not be costly and should be done as soon as possible. The Chair made an executive decision to take up the "Walking Trails" item on the agenda. Other discussion included the need in Magnuson and in all five sectors of the City for Safe Walking Trails. Diana Kincaid stated that women need to be able to walk alone and feel safe, to support access for regular exercise and health - research studies show it is important. The problem of lack of connectivity was aired—there is no trail to the North Shore Recreation Area. Someone mentioned "sidewalks to nowhere." Tom Kelly said that "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" (CPTED) criteria conflict with other values such as wildlife habitat. Having some areas and routes where long sightlines create perception of safety is desirable, but there is also need for routes and areas which don't have the sightlines or fit the criteria. Bob Scheulen said that people like to walk in areas which don't fit the criteria and they can be quite safe, for instance when walking at Discovery Park which although lacking the sightlines is safe because so many people are around. Julianna Ross suggested using the Outdoors for All Cycling Trail Map as a template for a walking trails map. Although a complete round-the-park walking trail had been identified as a priority in the Strategic Plan and recommended by the former Citizens Advisory Committee, in fact little had been done. Gail Chiarello moved and it was seconded that MPAC form a Walking Trails Subcommittee, to be chaired by Loren Hill, with members Tom Kelly, Diana Kincaid, Colby Bradley, Peter Zimmerman, Bob Scheulen, and Kim Wells, to work with Cheryl Fraser and a professional planner on this issue. The committee will begin meeting in 2014.

Director's Report (Cheryl Fraser)

Upcoming Events: Cheryl passed around a handout of Magnuson Park events for the period September 13-30, 2013. Magnuson Park had had a very busy and intense summer, especially with the new children's camps, which had hosted 600 children a week.

Building 11: The building will be handed over to the City September 30, 2013. Waldorf City High School is a firm tenant. Cascade Bicycle Club and Sail Sand Point are still in lease negotiations. PORCH has found another site and will not be in the building. The second floor space is ready; the wood floors have been sanded; the space is beautiful. Cheryl offered MPAC the opportunity to use the second floor for its October meeting, on a one-time basis. Parks is working with a contract

commercial real estate broker to find tenants for that space and has asked this person to develop a proposal. Parks spent an additional \$1M to bring the second floor up to snuff so that it would attract a high-end tenant.

Building 30: EarthCorps and Americorps have moved into the East Wing. The West Wing is not yet completed. It contains 35 artists' studios; there are commitments for 31 of these. The Officers Lounge is now ready. There was discussion on the name. There had been a separate building at the air station called the "Officers Club" which burned down. Then the Officers Club was moved to the basement of Building 9. The room in Building 30 now referred to as the Officers Lounge was originally named "The Admiral's Lounge," and Ron Miller, the Commanding Officer, used that space as his office. Diana Kincaid requested that MPAC and other volunteer groups be granted an annual, dedicated No Fee Event to be held in that space. Cheryl said she would take that under advisement.

Tennis Center: The Tennis Center is now open and their first weekend 500 rounds of tennis were played. Pete Zimmerman brought up the issue that the momentum of heavy traffic was still flowing on 62nd Avenue NE. Now that the Sportsfield Drive is open, trucks should be using that road. Colleen McAleer suggested signage indicating "Truck Route" might solve the problem.

Navy Radiation Clean-up: The Navy and Parks have weekly briefings on the status of the radiation clean-up. Soil clean-up will begin September 23rd, starting with the storm drains. The Washington State Department of Health will be doing air samples, beginning with Building 2.

Magnuson Park Management: The resignation of one managerial staff has opened up an opportunity for a site manager for Magnuson Park. This is not a new position, and it will be opened to City employees as a promotional opportunity. Skills sought will include customer service focus, contract management expertise, knowledge of construction processes, the ability to coordinate operational services including bringing back the newsletter. Lynn Ferguson recommended adding an understanding of the Vision and History of Magnuson Park. Cheryl stated the interview panel will have one individual on it representing the neighborhoods

Controls and Incentives (Lynn Ferguson and Nancy Bolin):

Lynn explained the historic district designation process. At the national level, buildings are determined to be historic are eligible for the Historic Tax Credit. Arena Sports, the University of Washington, and the Building 11 LLC had all been interested in eligibility for this tax credit. The park was successfully designated the historic "Naval Air Station Seattle at Sand Point." The second part of the process was local and designated the area as a Landmark District. This was a two-year process. The final step is establishing the Controls and Incentives for the Landmark District. These are written into the Seattle Municipal Code. Design Guidelines have also been rewritten for the district following the National Parks Guidelines for Restoration of Historic Sites.

In April 2013 Karen Gordon, head of the Landmarks Board, asked Lynn and Julianna to comment on draft Controls and Incentives which she and Eric Friedli had prepared. Lynn and Julianna put in a lot of time and sent back a detailed red-lined draft. When the C&Is were about to be presented to the Landmarks Board, Lynn saw that none of their input had made it into the final draft. Lynn met with Christopher Williams to ask him to delay signing off on the Controls and Incentives, pending more input. Karen Gordon, Eric Friedli, and Cheryl Fraser were all present at this meeting. Christopher seemed very supportive and agreed not to sign the document until he had given the matter further thought. A week later at John Barber's retirement party from the Parks Board, Christopher admitted to Lynn he had actually signed the documents two weeks previous to their meeting. Lynn was surprised that neither EF nor KG spoke up to remind Christopher this was a "done deal." Lynn attended the Landmarks Board meeting at which the C&Is were to be voted on. Members had many questions and concerns, and KG spoke huffily, saying, "You work at my pleasure, and if you don't like them [the C&Is], you can appeal to the Hearing Examiner." At the next meeting the C&Is passed unanimously. Now the C&Is go before the City Council's Land Use Committee for ratification. There

are 3 pages of exemptions for buildings and activities that would not be subject to any design review or compatibility process.

Lynn, Nancy Bolin, and Peggy Printz had spoken with CM Sally Bagshaw that morning about their concerns. Nancy Bolin stated the current C&I legislation for Magnuson does not comport with C&Is for other Historic Districts. Friends of the Naval Air Station wants a balanced local review board put in place in the legislation, and that some of the list of exemptions in both the Controls and the Guidelines be removed, so that major exterior changes to buildings and grounds in the entire property falls under design review. There should be a long-term vision for the park, with historically accurate roadways and grounds, possibly with a Visitors Center. The group has a meeting scheduled with Sally Clark.

Gail Chiarello moved that MPAC write a letter to all nine Councilmembers addressing the points which Lynn and Nancy had raised (see Attachment A) and expressing support, and that Nancy Bolin prepare a draft of this letter. The motion was seconded. In discussion, Tom Kelly said that the Vegetation Management Plan for the park is another document which should be taken into account in the review process. Diana Kincaid asked if there was a possibility of recognizing the earlier presence of the Duwamish tribe. Lynn Ferguson noted there was no Native American museum in Seattle. The motion passed with Aaron Hoard and Diana Kincaid abstaining. . NOTE: Cheryl Fraser left after the Controls and Incentives presentation.

Building 9 (Aaron Hoard)

Building 9 is in the process of being transferred to Washington State's Department of Commerce. "The lawyers on both sides are talking." Aaron hopes to have more definitive news next month. The UW is urging Commerce to work with MPAC, and he hopes to be able to give the group the name of a contact person at Commerce who will be working with us.

The University is looking to tear down Building(s) 141-192 described as "a giant heap to the left of the Mountaineers building, in the parking lot." The structure is technically two buildings of 1342SF and 3282SF respectively, but they are joined together. The estimated cost to take it down is \$800K. Surprise was expressed at the cost of demolition. Driving the cost up is the fact there is asbestos in the building, a large sewer main under the building, and shoring required because of the site slope.

Noise and Event Issues (Tom Kelly)

The Obliteride event was overall well-done but the Saturday afternoon that all the bikes returned, the music was very loud over at Promontory Point could not be heard even when he raised his voice, and Green Stage's Shakespeare in the Park event at the Community Garden was drowned out, spoiling that experience for the performers and audience. Days and weeks later, without any prompting from Tom, he heard complaints from people who had been in other parts of the Park.

The Zombie Run included a helicopter which came swooping in to rescue people from the Zombies. For 45 minutes it swooped around, very low, and very noisy, frightening people. Tom doubted the organizers had alerted Parks to the plan for a helicopter. That helicopter was loud enough to make speech conversation impossible even with raised voices. The helicopter's flight patterns also seemed to present undue safety risk and may have stressed wildlife. As Tom understood it, the helicopter use was not pre-approved by Parks staff.

He recommended that sound from events should be limited to reasonable levels, audible in a small local area for those involved in the event, but not emanating over much of the park and affecting those who want a different sort of park experience. The Peace Concerts were an example of music kept at a reasonable level.

Colleen McAleer added that she runs Gymboree and she's paid for her space in advance, and the kids who take the program have paid for it in advance. The helicopter and the Obliteride music both were very disruptive to her program. She recommended that there be concrete guidelines including a Traffic Management Plan, a limit on the number of decibels of noise, and other leasing guidelines—with penalties including not being allowed to come back. She felt strongly that Parks roads should never, ever be closed. The public should have the right to get into and out of the park. She commented these events did not bring in a lot of extra revenue, but they used up all the Parks resources. In discussion the suggestion was made to insure a Parks staff person is on-site during the events. Morgan Collins commented that Michelle Atkins works at the park on weekends. Her schedule is Wednesday-Sunday with Mondays and Tuesdays off.

GC moved that Colleen McAleer head up a subgroup which would draft up a list of these recommendations for MPAC to submit them to Parks. It was seconded. In discussion, it was suggested that Michelle Atkins be included in a meeting of the subgroup, and that the permitting process be reviewed, with a look at the actual application. Some suggested looking at the actual revenue stream these events represent. The motion passed unanimously. MPAC will be taking this issue up again at its October meeting.

MPD/Parks Levy Discussion (Gail Chiarello)

Gail wondered if the group would be interested in taking a position on the pending Metropolitan Parks District and/or levy which the Parks Legacy Committee is putting forward. There have been 6 meetings, most recent one last Thursday: Seven more are scheduled with a Public Hearing on November 7th. Others: September 19, October 3, October 17, November 7 – public hearing on proposed recommendations, November 21, December 5, and December 12. She made the following observations:

- Parks is throwing a lot of resources into either an MPD or a third Parks Levy, on the grounds that “it ain’t got no money.”
- Not clear that this is true. HARD to get usable financial information on the Parks Department budget and PIE CHARTS don’t make the cut. The Central Neighborhood Council Budget Committee is looking at some of the available information. Some preliminary analysis of 2012 salary data indicates that:
 - 10% of Parks staff have held their position 30 years or longer
 - 21 Parks staff make over \$100K a year, with an average length of service of 23 years
 - Of the 15 highest paid Parks staff, three individuals have been on the job 37 years, 39 years, and 43 years respectively.
 - Personnel costs are usually the largest expense of any program cost—running as high as 90% of the budget, adding in fringe benefits and pension.

Meanwhile questions arise as how existing resources are deployed. For example:

- Lifeguards at Magnuson Public Beach end the summer the week before Labor Day (do teenage lifeguards make much more than minimum wage?) Surely the last week of summer and Labor Day in particular bring the families and kids out in full force. Cost-cutting here doesn’t make any sense.
- An alarm goes off at the Public Swim Beach for several hours a few weeks ago. The teenager staff said they had called it in; and were told someone would be out to deal with it “sometime that afternoon.” The alarm was going off again this past Sunday. This Monday a Parks crew was pumping out the sewer system for the Comfort Station. Meanwhile A week ago Monday KC Swim Beach Monitoring reported a reading of 6000 units of fecal coliform at the Public Swim Beach, or KC presented this as a “red alert,” a level which rises to a Swimming Advisory (although she never saw one posted). Why was the earlier alarm ignored for hours? Was there a discharge into the lake? It seems likely.

These are just a couple of examples, and there may be a perfectly reasonable explanation, BUT this kind of thing raises questions.

- HOW is the Parks Department deploying its existing financial resources?

- Average City Council Member makes \$120K, 23 highest-paid Parks staff make \$115K
- SUPER makes same salary as the City Attorney.
- Council Members and City Attorney face the voters every 4 years; Parks staff face the voters when?
- Confirmation of the SUPER as per City Charter is the opportunity for a citizens performance review.
- A permanent SUPER who has gone through the Council confirmation should be in place before we start discussing new bonding and taxing authority.

There are also problems with an MPD, consider:

- A Metropolitan Parks District is a state-chartered corporation governed only by state laws.
- City Councilmembers would meet as the Metropolitan Parks District Board of Directors but would be acting as a State-chartered body. City Charter, etc., SMP not applicable. Acting as an MPD Board, Councilmembers could repeal any inconvenient City legislation (such as reconfirmation of Department heads).
- Although initially established by voters, MPDs cannot be undone by voters.
- MPDs can conduct any business activities as it shall judge desirable or beneficial for the production of revenue for expenditure for park purposes.

Gail asked if there was any interest in forming a committee or working group to look at any of these issues further, with the thought of coming back to MPAC in a couple of months with some recommendations.

Discussion followed. Tom Kelly felt that it was unfair to single out the Parks Department; he thought problems including productivity were widespread in City departments and it is much more challenging to fix problems than to list them. He also said most park employees are far from the top 1% and reducing wages and labor cost enough for significant impact would raise social justice concerns. GC responded that Parks was not unique but that other departments weren't asking for their own taxing & bonding capability. Diana Kincaid commented that the Parks Legacy Committee was looking primarily at the Parks' legacy—what kind of Park system did citizens want? She said the group was actively trying to prioritize services and had not even begun to look at financing mechanisms. She urged everyone to come to one of the next seven meetings and make their concerns known. Aaron Hoard felt that the whole issue—MPDs, levies, confirmation of the superintendent--all lay beyond the mission of MPAC. In his view MPAC is chartered with a very narrow focus, that is, to make recommendations on activities and issues at Magnuson Park. No one volunteered to help form a committee or working group on this issue.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Chiarello
Secretary

ATTACHMENT A:

**Disputed Exemptions to Controls and Incentives and Design Guidelines:
need public review process**

- A new building, whether on footprint or infill, needs certificate of approval. (add to legislation)
- Existing adopted VMP (Vegetative Management Plan) for historic district needs to be followed. (add to legislation)
- A Design Review Committee for the district needs to be established in the legislation with a balance of interests represented.
- Exempt Activities that are significant changes and should not be exempted from design review. (from proposed legislation)

c. Removal of non-native plants of any size. (delete, add follow VMP)

f. Removal or alterations to the following buildings/structures:

12. Brettler Family Place Apartments Buildings;*

13. Lowry Family Community Building; and*,

14. Tennis Center Sand Point.* (significant changes to large buildings within district boundaries should need certificate; went through Landmarks Board review before built)

g. In-kind street, sidewalk or curb replacement on SDOT streets and/or rights-of-way, (historic significance, should have public review)
or parking area resurfacing.

i. Installation, removal or replacement of recreational structures including but not limited to playground equipment and rock climbing areas. (New build certif. should be needed)

Move from Administrative Review to Design Committee Review with certificate needed:

d. Installation or removal of on-premises signs

n. Installation or removal of Public Art (1% for Arts) (need certify.)

p. Mothballing of buildings in the Landmark District. (need certificate)